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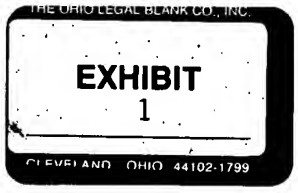

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CHILD MONITORING ~~CONTAINMENT~~, COMMUNICATION AND LOCATING SYSTEM

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates, in general, to a child containment, communication and locating system and, more particularly, to such a system wherein the child containment capability is provided by a presently existing pet containment system.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Numerous systems relating to containing, communicating with and locating children are presently available. Such systems, however, typically do not include all of the aforementioned capabilities. For example, U.S. Patent No. 4,136,338 (Antenore) discloses a perimeter alarm apparatus including a loop of wire that is placed within the ground so as to define the area in which the child is to be contained and electrical circuitry connected to the loop to detect the absence of a signal imposed on the loop. A sending unit is worn by the child and produces a signal that is imposed on the loop. If the child is within the defined area, the sending unit induces a signal on the loop. When the child moves beyond the loop by a ~~pre-determined~~ predetermined distance, no signal is imposed on the loop and an alarm is sounded. In the aforementioned patent, the signal is imposed on the loop by a sending unit worn by the child, rather than by a radio frequency transmitter under the control of the child's parent. In addition, means for communicating with the child or for determining the location of the child if the child leaves the defined area is not provided under the aforementioned patent.

[0003] U.S. Patent No. 5,661,460 (~~Sallen, et. al.~~ Sallen et al.) discloses a distance determination and alarm system comprised of a plurality of transceiver units, one transceiver unit being in the possession of the parent and the other transceiver unit being worn by the child. The system produces an alarm when the transceiver unit worn by the child is more than a ~~pre-determined~~ predetermined distance away from the transceiver unit in the possession of the parent. The distance is determined by the difference in the phase of a reference signal that is transmitted on a radio frequency signal by the parent's transceiver unit, then received and retransmitted by the child's transceiver unit, and then received again by the parent's transceiver unit. This patent does not include any means for containing the child within a ~~pre-determined~~